(e) how the interest of consumers would be protected?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) to (e) The Government has established Food Safety and Standards Authority of India under Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 consisting of 23 members including Chairperson of the Food Authority and appointed independent scientific experts as members of its scientific panels.

The scientific experts in these panels have been selected according to the approved procedures. With a view to bring together the best scientific expertise available in the country for forming scientific opinions, Scientists have been selected as members of the Panels/Committee in their individual capacity of being a scientist and an expert in their respective fields irrespective of their present association or affiliation with any public or private sector organisation. This is in accordance with the international practice followed in respect of Committees requiring high level expertise on any specific subject.

An elaborate procedure has been laid down to manage conflict of interest. The members of the Scientific Committee and Panels are required to submit an annual declaration of interest and declaration of any possible conflict of interest before each meeting of the Scientific Committee and panels. Whenever a conflict of interest is established, Chairman of the panel/Committee is required to exclude such a scientist from consideration of items in the agenda.

Thus an elaborate conflict of interest procedure has been introduced in this standard setting body (Food Safety and Standards Authority of India) in the interest of absolute transparency and objectivity.

The guidelines to Scientific Panels and Committee make it very clear that having an interest in a particular scientific issue does not necessarily mean a conflict of interest. In fact, keen intellectual interest in scientific issues is a pre-condition for participation in such Committee and Panels. It is based on the recognition that any scientist can contribute to scientific knowledge and safety of food, if discussions and conclusions are based on reliable scientific evidence, open discussion and rigorous validation procedures.

The Scientific Panels will provide scientific opinion to the Food Authority which would be reviewed by the Scientific Committee and the final decision would be taken by the Food Authority consisting of members from various stakeholders including the consumer organizations.

Specialists for treatment of infectious diseases

1290. SHRI M.P. ACHUTHAN:
SHRI D. RAJA:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India has very few doctors who specialize in treating patients suffering from infectious diseases (ID) though 48 per cent of deaths in the country are caused by such diseases like tuberculosis, typhoid, right down to the recent Swine Flu;

(b) if so, the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto;

(c) whether it is also a fact that none of the 20 odd medical colleges in the country offer a degree course in infectious diseases; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) and (b) No. The treatment of infectious diseases does not require specialization. The Medical Graduates (MBBS Doctors) are qualified to treat infectious diseases including tuberculosis, typhoid and swine flu. The Medical doctors posted in various Hospitals/Health Centres are given training/orientation from time to time to update their knowledge and skills. Continuous medical education (CME) and updates help the doctors to manage the cases.

(c) Yes.

(d) As mentioned in reply to (a) and (b) above, the Medical Graduates (MBBS Doctors) are fully qualified to treat infectious diseases with continuous medical education.

Nursing college in Chhattisgarh

†1291. SHRI SHREEGOPAL VYAS:
SHRI RUDRA NARAYAN PANY:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any proposal from the State Government of Chhattisgarh along with detailed project report for setting up 'Nursing College' in Jagdalpur and 'Centre for Excellence' in Raipur have been received; and

(b) if so, the status of the proposal including grant, if any?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) and (b) Although the State Government of Chhattisgarh has forwarded the proposal for setting up of Nursing College in Jagdalpur and Centre for Excellence in Raipur but the same can not be considered for release of grant as there is no approved scheme in this regard, at present.

Health survey in EAG States

1292. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:
SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.